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District 11 Northern Region**

Serving Northern California, Nevada, Utah



Vessel Safety Check Newsletter

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This newsletter is the publication of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, District 11NR - Vessel Safety Check program and published at no cost to either the Coast Guard or the Coast Guard Auxiliary. This newsletter will be distributed in PDF format electronically to each Vessel Examiner in D11NR with a CURRENT email. It can also be found on the D11NR website. It will be published on January 1st and each month starting with April and ending with October. Disclosure of the personal information contained in this publication is subject to the provisions contained in the Privacy Act of 1974. As a matter of policy, roster of names, addresses, email address and telephone numbers shall not be made available to the general public or any outside organizations. This newsletter is a team effort by the DSO-VE staff and is responsible for its content. If you have anything suitable you think should be included that others would benefit from, please send it to Mike Lauro. It may be discontinued at any time by the DSO-VE.

DSO Comments

By Mike Lauro



Recently a boater asked me: *What law requires vessel examiners to remove the plastic bags from wearable life jackets?*

Not knowing, I thought I would take some time and research this question. The answer is...THERE IS NONE! There is actually no Code of Federal Regulations (CFR's), or U.S. Code (USC) regulations, etc. requiring this practice. But, The Federal Requirements Booklet and The VSC Manual (on page 13) both state: "They should not be stowed in plastic bags...." However, both stop short of stating, "must". "The California ABC's of Boating Law Booklet", "The Nevada Handbook of Boating", and "The Highlights from Utah's Boating Laws and Rules", does not mention the "requirement" except to state that all pfd's "must be readily accessible." In addition to the above states, all the CFR's require is that the pfd's (life

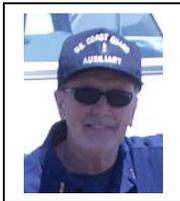
jackets) are "Readily Accessible" which is defined as: "reached in a reasonable amount of time." In short, a life jacket that is in a plastic bag, in and of itself, does not make the device improperly stowed. It does make it a point of education for the boater that should they be boarded or that you as an examiner must remove the life jacket from the plastic bag to ensure it is in good and serviceable condition. At that time, if the boater wants to place the life jacket back in the plastic bag, there is no Federal or State requirement that states they cannot do it. In addition I'm told that the Coast Guard at the Maritime Law Enforcement Academy (MLEA) in Charleston, S.C. is working to correct the misconception that life jackets must be out of the bag to be accepted as properly stowed. Unfortunately just like the un-mounted fire extinguisher, a life jacket stowed in a plastic bag is not considered a "Best Practice."

We as vessel examiners cannot oversee the VSC program and recreational boating safety in general by inserting our experiences and opinions. We must educate the boaters at our PE classes, through our PV program, and of course the VSC about the local laws of our individual states, the Code of Federal

Regulations (CFR's), the U.S. Code (USC) /Federal Requirements as they pertain to the Vessel Safety Check. All of the above information was easily researched through links on the D11NR Vessel Examiner website: <http://rbsafety.d11nuscgaux.info/ve.html> As always, your comments are welcome.

ADS Comments

By Joaquin Duran



This month's comments deal with fire extinguisher and examination techniques. Coast Guard Approved fire extinguishers are required on boats where a fire hazard could be expected from the motor or the fuel system. To be a Coast Guard approved extinguisher, look for the part of the label that says "**Marine Type USCG**" and Type B:C is indicated. The numbers of fire extinguishers required on a recreational boat are based on the type of boat and overall length of the boat. Fire Extinguishers are required on boats when any of the following conditions exist: inboard engines are installed, enclosed compartments and compartments under seats where portable fuel tanks may be stored, double bottoms not sealed to the hull or which are not completely filled with flotation materials, enclosed living spaces, closed stowage compartments in which combustible or flammable materials are stored and permanently installed fuel tanks. Fuel tanks secured so they cannot be moved in case of fire or other emergency are considered permanently installed. There are no

gallon capacity limits to determine if a fuel tank is portable. If the weight of a fuel tank is such that persons on board cannot move it, the Coast Guard considers it permanently installed. A letter and number symbol classify extinguishers. The letter indicates the type of fire the unit is designed to extinguish. A type B:C is the minimum requirement for marine application. Class B includes: flammable liquids, gasoline, propane, diesel fuel, oils, grease, paints, tars, lacquers, and flammable gases. Class C includes: energized electrical equipment that includes: wiring, fuel hoses, circuit breakers, machinery, and appliances. The number indicates the relative size of the extinguisher. The higher the number, the larger the extinguisher. Coast Guard approved extinguishers for boats are hand portable, are typically dry chemical and either B-I or B-II classification and have a specific marine type-mounting bracket. Portable extinguishers are NOT required to be tagged, but the extinguisher may need to be tagged for a marine survey. In the case where a Coast Guard approved fire extinguishing system is installed for the protection of the

engine compartment, the required number of portable units may be reduced. Ask the operator to retrieve each extinguisher. Ensure that all extinguishers are approved types and in serviceable condition. The approval labels and instructions must be clearly legible and pressure indicators must show within the normal charge range. Check the visual gauge at the top to determine that the plastic crystal covering the indicator is not pushed against the needle. When examining a hand-held dry chemical extinguisher, it is okay to push the green pressure indicating pin in/out several times. Also, when inspecting a portable extinguisher, as long as the indicator is in the "green" and the unit is less than 8-10 years old, you can assume it is in acceptable condition. You should recommend the extinguisher be mounted in a readily accessible position, away from the areas where a fire could likely start such as the galley or the engine compartment. Check dry chemical extinguishers by holding the fire extinguisher inverted to its normally stored position and solidly hitting the base of the extinguisher with the palm of the hand several times. By rocking the extinguisher the VE should be able to determine if the chemical moves freely within the cylinder. The concept that shaking can loosen the powdered chemical inside an extinguisher is erroneous. Caked powder will not "flow" but may fall with a "thunk" when the extinguisher is inverted. Caked powder is not acceptable. If there is evidence of damage, use, or leakage observed anywhere on the

extinguisher, including rust or corrosion, the unit is unacceptable. Do not rely on the gauge on HALON extinguishers. The pressure gauge alone is not an accurate indicator that HALON or HALON replacement extinguishers are full. Though NOT required by law, the weight of the unit(s) should be checked annually. Excessive high or low readings are cause for disqualification. Verify that both manual and fixed systems have appropriate seals and/or tags on the releasing mechanisms. Indicator lights on fixed systems will not show whether a cylinder leaked over a period of time. Manually activated systems with pull handles must have an intact lead or plastic seal on the releasing mechanism. The intact seal or tag shall be accepted as evidence of compliance. Verify that the manual controls for fixed systems are located outside the space the system is designed to protect. System tests are not required. The intact seal is sufficient evidence of compliance. Verify that in automatically actuated systems the thermal-activated fusible elements in the sprinkler heads are intact. If there is any indication that the system may have been discharged the operator should be advised to have the cylinders weighed. When time allows, discuss additional safety points with the operator to ensure they are aware of their fire fighting capabilities and limitations. The above information was supplied by: 2008 The Federal Requirements Booklet and The Vessel Safety Check Manual. As always, your comments are welcome.

 VSC Questions - Answers can be found in another location in the newsletter

1-Certain gear on a vessel must be Coast Guard, S.A.E. or U.L. approved to be eligible for a VSC decal. Which items are these?

- a. PFD's, VDS's, Fire Extinguishers, First Aid Kits, Anchors.
- b. PFD's, Fire Extinguishers, First Aid Kits, Navigation Lights, and MSD's.
- c. VDS's, Fire Extinguishers, Back Fire Flame Arresters, MSD's, and Navigation Lights.
- d. VDS's, PFD's, Fire Extinguishers, Back Fire Flame Arresters, and MSD's.

2-A documented recreational vessel is required to:

- a. Display the name and hailing port on the stern in letters at least 4" high.
- b. Display the name and hailing port on some conspicuous part of the hull in letter 4" high.
- c. Display the name and hailing port on both sides of the bow and stern in letters at least 4" high.
- d. Have the official number and net tonnage painted on the main beam in letters at least 4" high.

 Congratulations!

Congratulations to the following examiners who have performed 20 or more VSC's during 2008*:

Robert W. Hendry	01-02	Stephen R. Salmon	01-07
James R. Goff	03-05	Jeff D. Scarberry	03-09
Hannelore Maddox	03-09	Gilbert Ellis	05-01
Jim D. Blackburn	05-07	Paul J. Brighton	05-07
Anthony T. Budlong	06-04	Michael A. Rafatti	10-02
John L. Paval	10-03	Ricky A. Thomas	11-05

This brings our total to 21 examiners reaching this plateau!! This is approximately 7% of the total District examiner base. 2007 had 8 examiners or 3% at this time. **Where's your name?**

PLEASE be certain that all stats are reported MONTHLY using the CURRENT Form 7038 to your FSO-IS so you and your unit(s) will receive proper credit.

*Statistics as shown in AUXINFO thru May 2008

 Sailing Lingo Question- Answer can be found in another location in the newsletter

Are you an expert sailor?

A wire support from the mast to the stern of the ship is called the:

- a. Masternwireholderthingy
- b. Goggle-bobble
- c. Backstay

 VSC Calendar

If you have a planned event and would like it list here, send an email at least 45 days prior with a brief description to: sumfun@juno.com

-VSC Mega-Weeks-Memorial Weekend and ENTIRE month of JUNE

-National Marina Day-August 8th

-Vessel examiner Class at the PCA Fair August 16th and 17th-Coast Guard Island

Welcome Aboard and Welcome Back!

David K. Talton	01-07	Craig Teal*	03-10
Carol J. Teal*	03-10	James N. Higuchi	04-09
Wayne Farnholtz*	08-08	Anita Farnholtz*	08-08
Richard Thomas*	08-08	Christian Arroyo	10-02
Von C. Webber	10-05	John R. Boyne*	11-03
Robert Heger	12-02	Maynetta Sheaffer	12-02

***Re-certification**

With the addition of these 12 new and re-certified examiners for 2008, our examiner base total is now 258 active examiners! This represents about 18% of our total District membership. This information is supplied by the Director's office, as examiners are qualified.

Division Spotlight-Division 7

With the hard water turning soft in time for NSBW, Division 7 kicked off the 2008 boating season with a very successful VSC station @ Jordanelle State Park on 16, 17, & 18 May. The event is entitled "Utah Safe Boating Week On-The-Water Boat Show". Select boat dealers had various models on display in the parking lot & in the water. They even provided demo rides.

This event provides a great NSBW kick-off and opportunities for our Vessel Examiners to acquaint boaters with the Auxiliary and the Vessel Safety Check program.

VE James Zocchi was stationed at the Park Entrance Gate as a greeter to direct the boaters to the VSC Station. During the three-day event, ten examiners conducted 103 VSC's, with 53 being performed on Sunday! Several boats wouldn't pass until the examiner assisted the owner with a minor repair, such as a fuse or bulb, orange flag missing, etc. Memorial Day Weekend we will have a VSC Station @ Green River State Park to assist the Park Rangers with safety checks for every boat that is registered to run the "Annual Friendship Cruise" on the Green & Colorado Rivers. We will also conduct VSC's @ the El Nautica Boat Marina on Utah Lake on Sat. 23 May.

Riley Turpin SO-VE



Mark Gardner IDCP being interviewed by a local TV station.



Kay Hansen conducting a VSC.

National and District News

National News

Because of the many emails I've received about the inflatable lifejackets, I'm reprinting the LATEST information available:

"Inflatable life jackets that are to be used by qualified Auxiliary VE's and RBS-PV's are expected to arrive at ANSC per the following schedule: 3500 pfd's in June, and 3600 pfd's in July for a total of 7100 PFD's.

ANSC will distribute them to DCP's based on AUXDATA's Division-level counts of qualified Auxiliary VE's and RBS-PV's, for further distribution to FC's for appropriate program use at field level.

These life jackets have been purchased with Coast Guard funds and therefore have to be treated and tracked like Coast Guard property that is provided to Auxiliary units. Further, there is an additional element of program accountability that requires annual reporting to the Program Operations Branch of the Office of Auxiliary and Boating Safety (CG-54222) for three years.

As ANSC completes the distribution of each of these shipments, it will notify all regions of such on a Division-by-Division basis. Upon receipt at the Flotilla level, the life jackets shall be tracked and reported in accordance with regional guidelines for the reporting of Coast Guard property in the custody of Auxiliary units. In December of 2008, 2009, and 2010, the DCP shall also be responsible for reporting the distribution status of the life jackets directly to CG-54222".

Source: LCDR Kathryn Dunbar USCG

As the vessel examiners for the Power Squadron will also be receiving the exact same pfd's, I'm told that the pfd's will NOT have any Auxiliary markings but will have the "Wear It" logo on the back.

A word about NAVRULES:

"All vessels 12 Meters (39.4 feet) in length and longer operating on Inland Waters with federal jurisdiction still need to carry a copy of the "Navigation Rules International/Inland". This has been interpreted as meaning the actual book or the printable version from the internet from the Coast Guard because of the "available for ready reference" requirement in the rule. Vessels on "Sole State Waters" are **not** required to have a copy of the NAVRULES on board unless there is a state law that requires it. A binder with informational sheets included sounds like an excellent idea and is strictly voluntary and not required by any federal rule or regulation. "

George R Bores, BC-VTR

I don't believe this is an issue in D11NR, but I was asked to forward this information:

"A question came up regarding the VSC policy which prohibits conducting a VSC on a foreign vessel. Apparently there are numerous vessels from other countries, mostly Canadian in D13 and D9, D1, various in D7, D14, D11 that the Auxiliary would like and

are doing safety checks on. Legal has researched this concern and made the following determination:

According to CG Policy and the Vessel Safety Check manual, Auxiliarists are prohibited from performing voluntary inspections on foreign vessels. If they were to do these inspections contrary to CG policy, the Auxiliarists could be found to be out of the scope of their duty. If they are out of the scope of their duty they most likely would not receive protections for liability and any injuries they incur might not be covered. Please ensure that vessel examiners do not conduct vessel inspections on foreign vessels. If there is a genuine need to conduct such inspections, then that need must be clearly documented, justified, and communicated up the Chain of Leadership for the possibility of a policy change."

Source: CDR Valerian F. Welicka

Office of Auxiliary & Boating Safety (CG-542)

Chief, Auxiliary Division (CG-5421)

District News



Saturday May 17th, the kick-off date for National Safe Boating Week (NSBW), along with CPT. Swatland, and many other high profile representatives from Cal Boating, BOAT/US, The National Safe Boating Council, and many local Sheriff and Fire Depts., I was invited to help kickoff of the summer campaign of the 2008 "WEAR IT CALIFORNIA"

life jacket program at the Stockton Ports Stadium in Stockton. As in 2007, I performed a VSC on the vessel and participated in many photo ops. This year, as in 2007, the "WEAR IT CALIFORNIA" boat crew will distribute over 700 free inflatable life jackets throughout the Delta. This program sponsored by the Coast Guard, Cal Boating, Yamaha, and the National Safe Boating Council is credited with saving 4 lives and has helped increase life jacket usage from 6% in to 2006 to over 13% in 2007. Similar results are expected for 2008. I understand that a similar pilot program is also planned in the Nashville, Tennessee area. For photos, and more information on the program including a schedule of appearances of the vessel throughout the Delta area, click on the "Wear it California" link on your D11NR Vessel Examiner website:

<http://rbsafety.d11nuscgaux.info/ve.html>.

Lets all work together for our safety and to help support this important National outreach program by setting an example by wearing our lifejackets while performing VSC's, especially when working around docks and when climbing aboard large vessels in marinas!

A reminder about performing VSC's on the water:

The Coast Guard recently received a complaint that an Auxiliary facility was conducting Boarding's to perform a VSC. I want to remind our Vessel Examiners, coxswains and crew persons to conduct VSC's either on shore (while the boat is on the trailer), or at a dock/marina, and not be performing VSC's underway or at raft-ups.

This is clearly spelled out in the Vessel Safety Check Manual under "Conducting the Vessel Safety Check" on page 8, available for download/viewing from your D11NR website at: <http://rbsafety.d11nuscgaux.info/ve.html>. By not performing VSC's underway we will avoid any misperception that we are performing a boarding and remove any possibility of injury while "boarding" another vessel.

Once again, in time for NSBW, Kevin O'Leary of the **Bay and Delta Yachtsman Magazine** has written an excellent article in the May issue about the VSC program. This year, in addition to the VSC program, Kevin spotlights two examiners from 10-02; Tony Leonardi and Bill Correll, and two examiners from the Power Squadron; Don Webb and Joe Pustizzi while performing VSC's for the Sacramento Bayliner Yacht Club. If you haven't seen the magazine, the May issue is worth a look. It can be purchased at West Marine and many other marina outlets. The **Bay and Delta Yachtsman Magazine** has and continues to support RBS and specifically the VSC program.

Phil Grove DSO-PV has announced that he will have a $\frac{1}{2}$ day Program Visitor class at the August PCA Fair. For more information about the class and scheduling, you can contact Phil at: groventer@aol.com.

Gary Murray FSO-VE 5-5 is **ALWAYS** looking for vessel examiners to help perform VSC's at Lake Sonoma. Interested examiners can contact him at: dutcher@sonic.net

In the continuing evolution to provide information to assist both the new and experienced vessel examiners, there have several NEW additions and updates on YOUR Vessel Examiner website: <http://rbsafety.d11nuscgaux.info/ve.html>.

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Answer to Sailing Lingo Question: "b"

Answer to VSC questions:

Question 1-"d" See page 19 of the VSC Manual

Question 2-"a" See page 20 of the VSC Manual

